<u>Remarks</u>

Claims 1-39 are pending and rejected. The specification is amended to correct clerical errors. Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1-39.

Applicant has submitted three IDS submissions to the PTO in this application, and PAIR notes that the PTO has received the three IDS submissions. Applicant respectfully requests that the checked-off 1449 forms from these three IDS submissions be returned.

Claims 1-5, 14-18, and 27-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 5,745,712 (Turpin). Claim 27 relates to a method of operating a server system to direct product selection. Product selection is accomplished through a sequence of screens that a user responds to with user inputs. The system determines if the user data is consistent with a product – meaning that a selectable product exists for the user data entered on the current screen and on all previous screens in the sequence. (See the Application, page 14, lines 13-20 for an express and manifest description of the meaning of "consistent user data"). The system then controls the user's movement back and forth through the screens to ensure that the user data remains consistent with at least one product, but also to ease the burden on the user when entering data into the sequence of screens.

Claim 27 requires "processing user data from the user input signals to determine if the user data is consistent data that is consistent with at least one of a plurality of products." Turpin does not teach processing user data for *consistency with the products available for selection.* The Office Action cites the "truth maintenance" feature of Turpin as anticipating the above-cited claim limitation. The truth maintenance feature of Turpin maintains mathematical or logical relationships between data fields. (See Turpin, column 16, lines 8-10). Thus, if two fields have a mathematical relationship, and the user changes the data in one of the fields, then the system automatically updates the other field based on the new data and the mathematical relationship. For example, if an item costs $2.00, and the user fills in a quantity of 3, then the system automatically fills in the total cost field with $6.00. If the user changes the quantity to 5, then the system automatically

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re-fills in the total cost field with $10.00. Thus, when the user changes a field, the truth maintenance feature automatically updates related fields and databases.

Turpin uses the truth maintenance feature to *propagate* data through the forms and external databases based on preset mathematical or logical relationships. (See Turpin, column 16, lines 5-10). Turpin does not suggest using the truth maintenance feature to ensure consistency between user-entered data and at least one of the products available for selection. In fact, Turpin allows the user to overwrite their own data over data that was accurately entered by the truth maintenance feature. (See Turpin, column 17, lines 22-30). Turpin does not indicate what would happen if this user overwrite is inconsistent with all of the products available for selection. Applicant notes that maintaining mathematical or logical relationships between data fields does not anticipate maintaining consistency between user-entered data and at least one of the products available for selection.

Claim 27 also requires:

> "processing user screen selections from the user input signals;
>
> transferring a selected one of the screen signals corresponding to a selected one of the screens if the selected one of the screens is backward in the sequence or if all previous ones of the screens in the sequence prior to the selected one of the screens have the consistent data; and
>
> transferring to the user system over the communication network an earliest one of the screen signals corresponding to an earliest one of the screens in the sequence that does not have the consistent data if the selected one of the screens is forward in the sequence and if the previous ones of the screens in the sequence prior to the selected one of the screens do not all have the consistent data."

Thus, the invention of claim 27 allows the user to select screens for data entry. If the user-selected screen is back in the sequence, then the selected screen is provided. Advantageously, this allows the user to quickly jump back to a screen to modify a previous data entry. If the user-selected screen is forward in the sequence and if all user-entered data prior to the selected screen is consistent with at least one of the available products, then the screen is provided. Advantageously, this allows the user to quickly

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jump forward to a screen if data consistency permits. If the user-selected screen is forward in the sequence, and if all user-entered data prior to the selected screen is not consistent with at least one of the available products, then the screen is not provided. Instead the next screen in the sequence with the inconsistent data is provided. Advantageously, this prevents the user from jumping over the inconsistency. Once the inconsistency is resolved, the user may jump ahead to the next piece of inconsistent data, or if all entered data is consistent, then the user may jump ahead to the selected screen.

Thus, user migration through the screens is controlled by the consistency of the user-entered data with at least one of the available products. In contrast, Turpin uses a "tree" to control migration through the screens. (See Turpin, column 15, lines 13-29). The user may skip data entries in the tree. (See Turpin, column 15, lines 60-65). Thus, Turpin uses a tree structure with a user opt-out. This tree structure with user opt-out does not anticipate the claimed control over screen migration based on the consistency of the user-entered data with at least one of the available products. By allowing the user to skip fields, Turpin actually teaches away from the present invention, and falls into the confusing sequence of screens described in the problem section of the present Application. (See the Application, page 2, line 12 to page 3, line 7).

In both Turpin and the prior art described in the Application, the tab or the next key is used to move through a sequence. *Turpin never teaches that movement through the sequence is dependent on user data consistency with a product.* In both the described prior art and Turpin, the user may leave the sequence, but there is no technique for quickly moving the user ahead to the next piece of inconsistent user data. Advantageously, the invention allows the user to go back and change data, and if the user desires to move forward, then the system automatically proceeds to the next point where a data-product inconsistency exists. The user need not repeat the entire automatic sequence from the point where the change is made, as is the case in both Turpin and the described prior art. In Turpin, if the user were to jump way ahead, the system would let them do so, and would skip over product-inconsistent user data. Thus, Turpin has the same problem as the prior art described in the Application.

The same reasoning applies to claims 1-5, 14-18, and 28-31. The rejection should be withdrawn.

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Claims 1, 14, and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 6,064,982 (Puri). Puri is similar to the check-box systems described in the Background of the Application (See the Application, page 3, lines 8-21). Puri does not teach determining if user-entered data is consistent with at least one of the products available for selection. Puri does not teach controlling the forward movement within the forms based on consistency between the user-entered data and at least one of the products. Puri does not teach providing the next screen in the sequence where the user data is becomes inconsistent with all of the products available for selection. This rejection should be withdrawn.
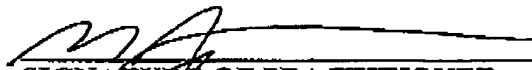
Claims 6-13, 19-26, 32-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,745,712 (Turpin) or U.S. Patent 6,064,982 (Puri). These claims are patentable for the reasons given above.

Claims 1-5, 14-18, and 27-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. U.S. Patent 6,064,982 (Puri) in view of U.S. Patent 6,233,609 (Mittal). Puri is similar to the systems described in the Background of the Application (See the Application, page 3, lines 8-21). Puri does not teach determining if user-entered data is consistent with at least one of the products available for selection. Puri does not teach controlling the forward movement within the forms to ensure consistency between the user-entered data and at least one of the products. Puri does not teach providing the next screen in the sequence where the user data is becomes inconsistent with all of the products available for selection.

Mittal mentions that the configurator negates any conflict or impossibility that may arise from client directives. Mittal does not disclose more on this topic, other than to note that the user is notified of a conflict, such as delayed shipment. Thus, the conflict or impossibility is not necessarily an inconsistency between user inputs and the products that are available for selection. In any event, Mittal does not teach controlling the movement through the forms based on the consistency between user-entered data and the available products, and does not teach providing the next screen in the sequence where the user data is becomes inconsistent with all of the products available for selection. This rejection should be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

The cited references fairly represent the prior art described in the Background of the Application. *The cited references simply do not teach controlling the user movement through the screens based on the consistency of user-entered data with the available products.* Applicants submit that there are numerous additional reasons in support of patentability, but that such reasons are moot in light of the above remarks and are omitted in the interests of brevity. Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1-39.

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